

REMARKS

Applicants' representative thanks the Examiner for courtesies extended during the telephonic interview of August 11, 2005, during which it was agreed that amendments to the claims herein overcome the present rejections. Claims 1, 3-27, 29-39 and 41 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 27, and 39 have been amended herein in accordance with the aforementioned telephonic interview, and claims 3, 4, 9-11, 33, and 41 have also been amended. Entry of these amendments is respectfully requested, as the amendments further prosecution and places the application in better condition for appeal. A listing of pending claims and associated status identifiers can be found at pages 2-7.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments below.

I. Rejection of Claims 1, 3-4, 6-13, 15-27, 29-39, and 41 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1, 3-4, 6-13, 15-27, 29-39, and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Johnson, *et al.* (US 6,567,805). Independent claims 1, 27, and 39 have been amended herein (in accordance with the telephonic interview with the Examiner) to recite ***at least one of the one or more topics associated with a prior probability defined prior to receipt of a query, the prior probability indicating a likelihood that a particular topic is desired absent additional information and deriving feedback*** based on the ***prior probability*** (or similar claim elements). (See, e.g., p. 14 line 30 – p. 15, line 6). Johnson, *et al.* (and other references currently on the record) fail to teach or suggest these aspects.

Johnson, *et al.* describes creating categories and thereafter assigning a query to such category, thereby assisting in retrieval of information. To determine a category, a score indicating a degree of a match to a query is calculated upon receipt of a query. These scores, however, are not prior probabilities as claimed, which indicate a likelihood that a particular topic is desired ***absent additional information***. In other words, Johnson employs a session history in connection with calculating probabilities, while the invention as claimed relates to likelihood that a particular topic is desired absent additional information.

Further, as discussed during the telephonic interview of August 11, 2005, Chen, *et al.* “Bringing Order to the Web: Automatically Categorizing Search Results,” Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, pp. 145-162, 04-2000. ACM Press (Hereinafter Chen, *et al.*) likewise fails to disclose the aforementioned claimed features. Chen, *et al.* discloses arranging Internet content hierarchically based upon a query, but does not teach or suggest any sort of ***prior probability assigned prior to receipt of a query that indicates a likelihood that a particular topic is desired absent additional information and deriving feedback*** based on the ***prior probability*** as claimed.

In view of at least the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1, 27, and 39 (and all claims that depend therefrom) be withdrawn.

II. Rejection of Claim 5 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Johnson, *et al.* Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested for at least the following reason. Claim 5 is dependent upon claim 1, which has been amended to overcome the cited reference (and other references on the record). Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

III. Rejection of Claim 14 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious under Johnson, *et al.*, in view of Herz, *et al.* (US 5,835,087). Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested for at least the following reasons. Herz, *et al.*, like Johnson, *et al.*, fails to disclose or suggest a ***prior probability assigned prior to receipt of a query that indicates a likelihood that a particular topic is desired absent additional information and deriving feedback*** based on the ***prior probability*** as recited in claim 1 (from which claim 14 depends). Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

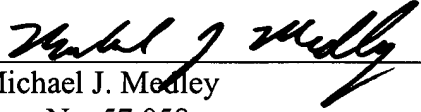
The present application is believed to be condition for allowance in view of the above amendments and comments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP166US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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